

Boys' and Girls' Column.

The Planet Jupiter.

The planet Jupiter is now in a very favorable position for inspection. Being near his opposition, or nearest point to the earth, his apparent diameter or size is much greater than when in the more remote points of his great orbit; hence his unusual splendor in our evening sky at the present time. He makes a complete journey round the sun once in about twelve years. His course of track through the fixed stars may therefore, on account of this slow motion, be very easily traced, from the fact that he passes each year through one of the twelve signs or constellations Aries, Taurus, Gemini, etc. He is now in "Leo," and rises in the east early in the evening, being near the brightest of a group of five stars forming the Sickle.

Jupiter in size outranks all the other planets, being thirteen hundred times as large as the earth. He is a very interesting object viewed through the telescope. With even a very ordinary instrument, he appears as a glass of two feet in length, he appears as a small, bright, round body, attended by four little stars which are his satellites or moons. These are invisible to the naked eye, but one or two of them can often be distinguished through a good opera glass. The belts of Jupiter, as they are called, can be seen through an instrument of moderate power. They appear as bands or stripes of a darker shade than the body of the planet, stretching longitudinally across the same. They vary at times in their general appearance, width, etc. It is a very interesting study to watch and note the changes in the movements of the moons of Jupiter through a telescope from night to night. These motions are caused by their revolutions around the earth. Jupiter and his four satellites afford a very striking illustration in miniature of the Sun and his attendant planets, Mercury, Venus, the Earth, Mars, etc., revolving around him as a center.

Space forbids us to pursue the subject further, but in a future article we will perhaps give some hints in practical astronomy which will enable boys of a mechanical nature to construct an astronomical telescope at a much less cost than one can be obtained otherwise.

Astronomical Enigma.

48 LETTERS.

My 6, 17, 24, 33, 48, 11, 21, 31, 8 are small heavenly bodies.

My 23, 16, 44, 22, 38, 41, 7, 38 was the discoverer of Saturn's satellite, 4, 18, 43, 35, 27.

My 22, 32, 14, 3, 42 is the color of Sirius.

My 5, 39, 10, 32, 46, 22, 48, 35, 37, 20 is the motion of Uranus' satellites.

My 25, 6, 5, 1, 2, 38, 28, 9, 15, 26 is seen upon the moon and is due to the reflection of light.

My 13, 41, 19, 29, 8 is one of the planets, to us.

My 3, 32, 9, 34, 6, 30, 47, 17 is a constellation in the Southern Hemisphere.

My 12, 11, 5, 43, 29, 36, 6, My 45, 9, 37, 14, 38, and my 40, 20, 8, 10, 35 are Asteroids.

My whole is considered by astronomers as a great event.

A young contributor to this department has sent us the foregoing. Solutions may be sent to the editor of this paper through the Post-office, or otherwise. Contributions to this department are solicited from our young folks.

Winter Life in Florida.

There are five ladies sitting near me in summer attire, and the thermometer stands at 79 degrees in the shade, this 3d of January. The roses and jonquils are filling the air with their fragrance, and the birds are cheering us with their sweet songs. A walk on the sea-wall would give us a light breeze and bring us to old Fort San Marco, the most ancient building in the United States. It is a Spanish fort, built in the seventeenth century, and with its moat, its sally-port and its Spanish inscription and coat-of-arms over the entrance, has a very foreign appearance. It is built of coquina, and the eastern side next the sea still bears the marks of the attack of Gen. Oglethorpe. A little to the west of the fort stand the pillars of the old city gate, a curious relic of past ages. Entering St. George street by this gate, and reaching the center of the town, you find another ancient building, which was formerly the residence of the Spanish governors, in front of which is the plaza, with its Spanish monument in the center. North of the plaza stands the old Romish cathedral, whose doors are never closed. On the opposite side of the plaza stands the beautiful residence of Dr. Bronson, with the tall palm trees and luxuriant roses always in bloom. As you enter the city by rail you pass the elegant residence of Senator Gilbert, who has done much for St. Augustine, and whose orange grove, bananas, magnolias and drooping moss cheer the eye and heart just fresh from the northern snows. But strongest of all the attractions at St. Augustine is the delightful climate, where the tropical sun never gives chills and fever or other malarious diseases, but where health and pleasure come with every breath. Among the guests here is Capt. Harrison of the United States coast survey, who is in command of a company for surveying the eastern coast of Florida.

—St. Augustine, January 3d.

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